

11, 2001. Further, it would gradually increase benefits to \$1600 per month for those members of the Guard and Reserves who serve in the Selected Reserve for 12 years or more and who continue serving in the Selected Reserve.

Servicemembers who enlist after they have already received post-secondary education degrees should also be allowed to benefit under an improved GI Bill and be allowed to use their education benefits to repay Federal student loans. Under our bill, servicemembers could use up to \$6,000 per year of Montgomery G.I. Bill education benefits to repay Federal student loans. And, it doubles from \$317 to \$634 the education benefits for other members of the Guard and Reserves.

Our bill also recognizes the sacrifice of all who have served in the Global War on Terror, including members of the Guard and Reserve who are serving on active duty and deploying at historic rates by doubling the educational assistance for members of the Selected Reserve and, again, making the educational benefits transferable to family members.

Finally, I do think it is important that the Administration's views on this important issue are taken into account. That is why earlier this month, Senator LEVIN and I wrote to the Department of Defense seeking views on proposals to modernize the GI Bill.

Again, it is my hope that the proponents of the pending veteran's education benefits measures can join together to ensure that Congress enacts meaningful legislation that the President will sign. Such legislation should address the entire spectrum of the All Volunteer Force. It must be easily understood and implemented and responsive to the needs not only of veterans, but also of those who are serving in the active duty forces, the Guard and Reserve, and their families. Their exemplary service to our nation, and the sacrifice of their families, deserves no less.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter of support be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE,
Washington, DC, April 29, 2008.

Hon. JOHN MCCAIN,
Ranking Member, Committee on Armed Services,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCAIN: you earlier asked for my views on S. 22. Since your request, two other bills have been introduced (H.R. 5684 and, in the Senate, the Enhancement of Recruitment, Retention, and Readjustment Through Education Act of 2008). I welcome the opportunity to outline the criteria the Department has established to evaluate specific proposals, with the ultimate objective of strengthening the All-Volunteer Force, as well as properly recognizing our veterans' service.

Our first objective is to strengthen the All-Volunteer force. Accordingly, it is essential to permit transferability of unused education benefits from service members to family. This is the highest priority set by

the Service Chiefs and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, reflecting the strong interest from the field and fleet. Transferability supports military families, thereby enhancing retention. Second, any enhancement of the education benefit, whether used in service or after retirement, must serve to enhance recruiting and not undercut retention.

Third, significant benefit increases need to be focused on those willing to commit to longer periods of service—hence the Department's interest in at least six years of service to be eligible for transferability. Re-enlistments (and longer service) are critical to the success of the All-Volunteer Force. Fourth, the program should provide participants with benefits tailored to their unique situation, thereby broadening the population from which we retain and recruit. This includes those whose past educational achievements have resulted in education debt through student loans, and those seeking advanced degrees and who may have earned undergraduate degrees with Department of Defense support.

As you may well appreciate, a key issue is the determination of the benefit level for the basic GI bill program. The Department estimates that serious retention issues could arise if the benefit were expanded beyond the level sufficient to offset average monthly costs for a public four-year institution (tuition, room, board, and fees). These costs are presently estimated at about \$1,500 according to the National Center for Education Statistics. This would still entail a substantial increase to the present benefit value of \$1,100.

An important corollary to the GI Bill is the recognition that today, remaining in the military is entirely consistent with the attainment of education goals. Unlike the past, our nation now encourages the fulfillment of college aspirations while serving, thus dealing with readjustment through up front programs, rather than only after discharge. DoD invests about \$700 million annually to offer funded, education tuition assistance for our servicemen and women while serving. More than 400,000 members of the armed forces took advantage of such tuition assistance last year.

In conclusion, for all these reasons, the Department does not support S. 22. This legislation does not meet, and, in some respects, is in direct variance to the Department's above-stated objectives and supporting criteria.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We look forward to working closely with the Congress to strengthen the All-Volunteer force through a balanced program of recruiting, retention and education benefits, and to recognize the service of our veterans.

Sincerely,

ROBERT M. GATES

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 539—TO AUTHORIZE TESTIMONY AND LEGAL REPRESENTATION IN STATE OF MAINE V. DOUGLAS RAWLINGS, JONATHAN KREPS, JAMES FREEMAN, HENRY BRAUN, ROBERT SHETTERLY, AND DUDLEY HENDRICK

Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 539

Whereas, in the cases of State of Maine v. Douglas Rawlings (CR 09-2007-441), Jonathan

Kreps (CR-2007-442), James Freeman (CR-2007-443), Henry Braun (CR-2007-444), Robert Shetterly (CR-2007-445), and Dudley Hendrick (CR-2007-467), pending in Penobscot County Court in Bangor, Maine, a defendant has subpoenaed testimony from Carol Woodcock, an employee in the office of Senator Susan Collins;

Whereas, pursuant to sections 703(a) and 704(a)(2) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 2 U.S.C. 288b(a) and 288c(a)(2), the Senate may direct its counsel to represent employees of the Senate with respect to any subpoena, order, or request for testimony relating to their official responsibilities;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may, by the judicial or administrative process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate;

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may promote the administration of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved That Carol Woodcock is authorized to testify in the cases of State of Maine v. Douglas Rawlings, Jonathan Kreps James Freeman, Henry Braun, Robert Shetterly, and Dudley Hendrick, except concerning matters for which a privilege should be asserted.

SEC. 2. The Senate Legal Counsel is authorized to represent Carol Woodcock, and any other employee of the Senator from whom evidence may be sought, in the actions referenced in section one of this resolution.

SENATE RESOLUTION 540—RECOGNIZING THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SLOOP-OF-WAR USS "CONSTELLATION" AS A REMINDER OF THE PARTICIPATION OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE AND OF THE EFFORTS OF THE UNITED STATES TO END THE SLAVE TRADE

Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself and Mr. CARDIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 540

Whereas, on September 17, 1787, the Constitution of the United States was adopted, and article I, section 9 declared that Congress could prohibit the importation of slaves into the United States in the year 1808;

Whereas, in 1794, the United States Congress passed "An Act to prohibit the carrying on the Slave Trade from the United States to any foreign place or country", approved March 22, 1794 (1 Stat. 347), thus beginning the efforts of the United States to halt the slave trade;

Whereas, on May 10, 1800, Congress enacted a law that outlawed all participation by people in the United States in the international trafficking of slaves and authorized the United States Navy to seize vessels flying the flag of the United States engaged in the slave trade;

Whereas, on March 2, 1807, President Thomas Jefferson signed into law "An Act to prohibit the importation of slaves into any port or place within the jurisdiction of the United States, from and after the first of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eight" (2 Stat. 426);

Whereas, on January 1, 1808, the prohibition on the importation of slaves into the United States took effect;

Whereas, on March 3, 1819, Congress authorized the Navy to cruise the coast of Africa to suppress the slave trade, declaring that Africans on captured ships be placed under Federal jurisdiction and authorizing the President to appoint an agent in Africa to facilitate the return of captured Africans to the continent;

Whereas, in 1819, the Royal Navy of Great Britain established the West Coast of Africa as a separate naval station and actively plied the waters in pursuit of slave ships, and Great Britain negotiated with many other countries to obtain the right to search vessels suspected of engaging in the slave trade;

Whereas, on May 15, 1820, Congress declared the trading of slaves to be an act of piracy and that those convicted of trading slaves were subject to the death penalty;

Whereas the Webster-Ashburton Treaty between Great Britain and the United States, signed August 9, 1842, provided that both countries would maintain separate naval squadrons on the coast of Africa to enforce their respective laws against the slave trade;

Whereas, in 1843, the newly formed United States African Squadron sailed for Africa and remained in operation until the Civil War erupted in 1861;

Whereas, in 1859, the USS *Constellation*, the last all-sail vessel designed and built by the United States Navy, sailed to West Africa as the flagship of the United States African Squadron, which consisted of 8 ships, including 4 steam-powered vessels suitable for chasing down and capturing slave ships;

Whereas, on December 21, 1859, the USS *Constellation* captured the brig *Delicia* after a 10-hour chase, and although the *Delicia* had no human cargo on board upon capture, the crew had been preparing the ship to take on slaves;

Whereas, on the night of September 25, 1860, the USS *Constellation* spotted the barque *Cora* near the mouth of the Congo River and, after a dramatic moonlit chase, captured the slave ship with 705 Africans crammed into her permanent "slave deck";

Whereas after capturing the *Cora*, a detachment of the *Constellation's* crew sailed the surviving Africans to Monrovia, Liberia, a colony founded for the settlement of free African Americans, which became the destination for all Africans freed on slave ships captured by the United States Navy;

Whereas, on May 21, 1861, the USS *Constellation* captured the brig *Triton*, and although the *Triton* did not have Africans captured for slavery on board when intercepted by the *Constellation*, a search confirmed that the ship had been prepared to take on slaves;

Whereas the *Triton*, registered in Charleston, South Carolina, was one of the first Union naval captures of the Civil War;

Whereas, from 1859 to 1861, the USS *Constellation* and the United States African Squadron captured 14 slave ships and liberated nearly 4,000 Africans destined for a life of servitude in the Americas, a record unsurpassed by the squadron under previous commanders; and

Whereas, on September 25, 2008, the USS *Constellation* Museum will hold a ceremony to commemorate the bicentennial of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade aboard the same ship that, 148 years before, forced the capitulation of the slave ship *Cora* and freed the 705 Africans confined within: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the historical and educational significance of the USS *Constellation*, a 153-year-old warship berthed in Baltimore, Maryland, as a reminder of both the participation of the United States in the

slave trade and the efforts of the United States Government to suppress the inhumane practice;

(2) applauds the preservation of the historic vessel and the efforts of the USS *Constellation* Museum to engage people from all over the world with this vital part of our history; and

(3) supports the USS *Constellation* as an appropriate site for the Nation to commemorate the bicentennial of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade in 2008.

SENATE RESOLUTION 541—SUPPORTING HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS, ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ABUSES IN SOMALIA, AND URGING CONCRETE PROGRESS IN LINE WITH THE TRANSITIONAL FEDERAL CHARTER OF SOMALIA TOWARD THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A VIABLE GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY

Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. BROWN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. HAGEL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 541

Whereas, despite the formation of the internationally recognized Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in 2004, there has been little improvement in the governance or stability of southern and central Somalia, and stability in the northern region of Puntland has deteriorated;

Whereas governance failures in Somalia have permitted and contributed to escalating violence, egregious human rights abuses, and violations of international humanitarian law, which occur with impunity and have led to an independent system of roadblocks, checkpoints, and extortion that hinders trade, business, and the delivery of desperately needed humanitarian assistance;

Whereas the Government of Ethiopia intervened in Somalia in December 2006 against the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) and continues to serve as the primary security force for the TFG in Somalia;

Whereas a United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia report presented to the United Nations Security Council on July 20, 2007, alleged that Eritreans have provided arms to insurgents in Somalia as part of a long-standing dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea that includes a series of interlocking proxy wars in the Horn of Africa;

Whereas the United Nations estimates that, as of April 2008, 2,000,000 people in Somalia need humanitarian assistance or livelihood support for at least the next 6 months, including 745,000 people who have fled ongoing insecurity and sporadic violence in Mogadishu over the past 16 months, adding to more than 275,000 long-term internally displaced Somalis;

Whereas, despite Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein's public commitment to humanitarian operations, local and international aid agencies remain hindered by extortion, harassment, and administrative obstructions;

Whereas, in March 2008, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon presented his report on Somalia based on recent strategic assessments and fact-finding missions, which offered recommendations for increasing United Nations engagement while decreasing the presence of foreign troops, including the establishment of a maritime

task force to deter piracy and support the 1992 international arms embargo;

Whereas the United States Government has allocated nearly \$50,000,000 to support the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and continues to be the leading contributor of humanitarian assistance in Somalia, with approximately \$140,000,000 provided in fiscal year 2007 and fiscal year 2008 to date, but still lacks a comprehensive strategy to build a sustainable peace;

Whereas, over the last 5 years, the Senate has repeatedly called upon the President through resolutions, amendments, bills, oversight letters, and hearings to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to contribute to lasting peace and security throughout the Horn of Africa by helping to establish a legitimate, stable central government in Somalia capable of maintaining the rule of law and preventing Somalia from becoming a safe haven for terrorists;

Whereas a February 2008 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report entitled, "Somalia: Several Challenges Limit U.S. and International Stabilization, Humanitarian, and Development Efforts", found that United States and international "efforts have been limited by lack of security, access to vulnerable populations, and effective government institutions" as well as the fact that the "U.S. strategy for Somalia, outlined in the Administration's 2007 report to Congress on its Comprehensive Regional Strategy on Somalia, is incomplete";

Whereas the recent designation by the Department of State of Somali's al Shabaab militia as a foreign terrorist organization under section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189) and as a specially designated global terrorist under section 1(b) of Executive Order 13224 (September 23, 2001) highlights the growing need for a strategic, multifaceted, and coordinated approach to Somalia; and

Whereas it is in the interest of the United States, the people of Somalia, and the citizens and governments of neighboring and other interested countries to work towards a legitimate peace and a sustainable resolution to the crisis in Somalia that includes civilian protection and access to services, upholds the rule of law, and promotes accountability: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the United States remains committed to the people of Somalia and to helping build the institutions necessary for a stable nation free from civil war and violent extremism;

(2) the President, in partnership with the African Union, the United Nations, and the international community, should—

(A) provide sufficient humanitarian assistance to those most seriously affected by armed conflict, drought, and flooding throughout Somalia, and call on the Transitional Federal Government to actively facilitate the dispersal of such assistance;

(B) ensure accountability for all state, non-state, and external parties responsible for violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in Somalia, including through the deployment of United Nations human rights monitors and the establishment of a United Nations Commission of Inquiry to investigate abuses;

(C) call on all parties to recommit to an inclusive dialogue, with international support, in the interest of promoting sustainable peace and security in Somalia and across the Horn of Africa;

(D) urge the Government of Ethiopia, in coordination with the United Nations Political Office in Somalia, to develop a clear timeline for the responsible withdrawal of its